

Message Text

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TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 061546

EXDIS, TOSEC 743

TAGS: PO, SP, PINS, PFOR, NATO

SUBJECT: UK AMBASSADOR'S TALK WITH ACTING SECRETARY
ON PORTUGAL AND SPAIN; ECEVIT VISIT TO LONDON

1. SUMMARY. UK AMBASSADOR RAMSBOTHAM ACCOMPANIED BY HEAD
OF CHANCERY WILBERFORCE, CALLED ON ACTING SECRETARY
MARCH 15. FOCUS WAS PORTUGAL: MARCH 11 ABORTIVE COUP WAS
GROSS MISCALCULATION BY RIGHT WHICH GREATLY STRENGTHENED
LEFT AND TENDENCIES TOWARD LONG-TERM MILITARY TUTELAGE;
ELECTION CALENDAR RECONFIRMED BUT SIGNIFICANCE OF APRIL 12
ELECTION AS A DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN DOUBT; WESTERN ALLIES
MUST CONSULT CLOSELY ON ACTIONS TOWARD PORTUGAL, PRE-
FERABLY IN EC CONTEXT RATHER THAN NATO; ECONOMIC AID TO
PORTUGAL SHOULD CONTINUE AND EC MEMBERS PLUS SCANDI-
NAVIANS SHOULD DO MORE. RAMSBOTHAM ASKED IF SPANISH
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ARE PRESSING TO JOIN NATO, AND HE WAS TOLD THAT

SPANISH WANT AND NEED TO STRENGTHEN WIDE RANGE OF FORMALTIES WITH WESTERN EUROPE. RE TURKEY, FORMER PRIME MIN ECEVIT TO BE IN LONDON MARCH 20-24 (IF HIS POSSIBLE REINSTATEMENT AS PRIME MIN DOES NOT HOLD HIM IN TURKEY). END SUMMARY

2. PORTUGAL

A. GENERAL ASSESSMENT. RAMSBOTHAM REPORTED FOLLOWING VIEWS FROM UK EMBASSY LISBON: CHECKS AND BALANCES OF CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS SWEEP AWAY. MILITARY AND LEFT GREATLY STRENGTHENED. FAR LEFT HOLD ON UNITARY LABOR CONFEDERATION BOOSTED. DOUBTS ABOUT DEMOCRATIC VALUE OF APRIL 12 ELECTIONS. ARMY CHIEF FABIAO DISMAYED AT DECLINE IN MILITARY DISCIPLINE SINCE MARCH 11, BADLY NEEDED GAINS IN DISCIPLINE OF PAST TWO MONTHS WIPE OUT. ACTING SECY SAID BRITISH INFO GENERALLY CONSISTENT WITH OURS.

B. PORTUGUESE FOREIGN MINISTER SOARES. SOARES, "DOUBLY DOWNCAST, RESIGNEDLY PESSIMISTIC," TOLD UK AMBASSADOR IN LISBON: SPINOLA VICTIM OF OWN AMBITION IN ILL-CONCEIVED ACTION. RESULT ONLY STRENGTHENS ANTI-DEMOCRATIC FORCES. ESPECIALLY DISHEARTENING TO SOCIALISTS (PSP - SOARES' PARTY), BECAUSE LATEST OPINION POLLS HAD SHOWN PSP AND SOARES AHEAD OF ALL THE REST IN ELECTION CAMPAIGN. NOW RPT NOW TOO LATE FOR WEST TO HELP. WHEN ASKED IF GOP WOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO FOREIGN PRESS COMMENT, SOARES WAS NOT RPT NOT ENCOURAGING.

C. US ECONOMIC AID FOR PORTUGAL. RAMSBOTHAM ASKED IF US EXECUTIVE OR CONGRESS HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ON AID FOR PORTUGAL. ACTING SECRETARY SAID QUESTION IS NATURAL AND WE KEEP IT IN MIND, BUT AID IS ONLY LEVER WE HAVE AND WE ARE PROCEEDING WITH LOANS ALREADY SIGNED. EUR DEPUTY ASST SECY LAINGEN NOTED THAT ONE EFFECT OF CURRENT UNCERTAINTY IN PORTUGAL MIGHT BE TO CAUSE SOME IN CONGRESS TO ADVOCATE SHIFTING GREATER PORTION OF AID TO PORTUGUESE AFRICA. NONETHELESS, CARLUCCI STRONGLY CONFIDENTIAL

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SUPPORTS CONTINUING AID FROM US AND EUROPEANS. SEVEN MILLION DOLLAR US LOAN FOR HOUSING TEMPORARILY HELD UP BECAUSE CONGRESS STILL ACTING ON OVERALL AID FY 1975 APPROPRIATION, BUT WE PLAN TO GO AHEAD WITH LOAN.

D. EUROPEAN AID FOR PORTUGAL. ACTING SEC. ASKED WHAT UK AND OTHER EUROPEANS ARE DOING FOR PORTUGAL. RAMSBOTHAM REPLIED THERE HAVE BEEN NUMBER OF VISITS BACK

AND FORTH -- UK FONMIN CALLIGHAN CLOSE TO SOARES,
AND UK STILL THINKS OF PORTUGAL AS "OLDEST ALLY"
BUT LITTLE CONCRETE AID HAS FLOWED AND NONE FROM UK.
PORTUGUESE AMB. IN WASHINGTON, THEMIDO, ASKED RAMSBOTHAM
IF UK COULD INTERCEDE WITH SCANDINAVIANS TO DO MORE,
AND RAMSBOTHAM SAID UK HAS BEEN TRYING, HOWEVER, EUROPEANS

HAVE BEEN STYMIED IN PART BY GOP'S FAILURE TO SUGGEST
SPECIFIC ASSISTANCE, EXCEPT TO REQUEST TRADE HELP FROM
EC.

E. FOLLOW-UP CONSULTATION ON PORTUGUESE SITUATION
AND AID. RAMSBOTHAM SUGGESTED EC AS LESS AWKWARD
FORUM THAN NATO FOR CONSULTING ON PORTUGAL, GIVEN
PORTUGAL'S PARTICIPATION IN NATO. IF EUROPEANS
DECIDE TO USE EC FOR THIS, UK WILL KEEP US INFORMED.
ACTING SECRETARY EMPHATICALLY URGED EUROPEANS TO DO
ALL POSSIBLE, BE SURE FRANCE PARTICIPATES. US AND
EUROPEANS SHOULD STAY IN CLOSE TOUCH ON THIS.

F. MISCELLANY. RAMSBOTHAM NOTED SPECULATION THAT
COMMUNISTS MAY HAVE HAD SOME PROVOCATIVE ROLE IN COUP
ATTEMPT, SAID UK STILL AWAITS REPORT FROM THEIR
AMBASSADOR IN MOSCOW. ACTING SECY SAID THIS IS
INTERESTING QUESTION, BUT NO RPT NO CONCRETE EVIDENCE.
ASKED IF AMB. CARLUCCI'S SECURITY IS ALL RIGHT, ACTING
SECY SAID YES, GOP PROTECTION AROUND OUR EMBASSY
HAS BEEN GOOD, CARLUCCI'S SECURITY SITUATION STABLE.

3. SPAIN. RAMSBOTHAM ASKED IF IT IS TRUE SPAIN
IS PRESSING TO ENTER NATO. LAINGEN CONFIRMED SPANISH
INTEREST. ROWELL (EUR/IB) NOTED THAT SPANISH
CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR OWN INEVITABLE POLITICAL TRANSI-
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TION, AND APPEAR TO BE SEEKING AS MANY NEW TIES AS POS-
SIBLE WITH WEST EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS SO THAT SPAIN
WILL NOT RPT NOT BE AS ISOLATED AS PORTUGAL WAS
BEFORE APRIL 1974 AND THUS WILL BE BETTER ABLE TO
WEATHER THE TRANSITION.

4. TURKEY. FORMER PRIME MIN ECEVIT IS TO ADDRESS
CHATHAM HOUSE IN LONDON MARCH 20, CALL ON BRITISH FOREIGN
MIN CALLIGHAM MARCH 21, PM WILSON MARCH 24. CALLIGHAN
INTENDS TO GO DEEPLY INTO WHOLE CYPRUS QUESTION.
BRITISH EMBASSY MINISTER SYKES WILL CONFER WITH ASST
SECY HARTMAN IN WASHINGTON MARCH 17 ON THIS SUBJECT.
ACTING SECY NOTED ECEVIT TRIP COULD BE CANCELLED IF
HE BECOMES PM AGAIN THIS WEEK. INGERSOLL

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